THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI CHINTA MOHAN): (a) and (b) The notices have been issued to several companies warning them that if they do not discharge their liabilities, the amounts would be recovered as arrears of land revenue through Collectors. Out of these companies, M/s. Pfizer and M/s. Abbett have gone to Court against the recovery notices.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) All efforts are being made to recover the due amount from the companies, as quickly as possible.

Justification for reducing the prices of Medicines

383. SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR SAHU: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to refer to the answer to Starred Question 398 given in Rajya Sabha on the 26th March, 1992 and state:

(a) how Government arrive at the conclusion that adequate justification for reducing the prices of decontrolled formulations does not exist when there are no basis of intervention;

(b) how producers are persuaded to reduce prices in the overall interest of consumers when they are not able to get details in Form-6 and all other details required under DPCO, 1987;

(c) what are the details of Forms required to be submitted by Drug Units under DPCO, 1987 and how many companies have submitted such details each year during the last three years;

(d) whether it it a fact that wherever it suits the officials the prices of the formulations are not reduced and reductions are not made in these cases where the turn over is large; and

(e) what steps are being taken to lay down certain guidelines in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI CHINTA MOHAN): (a), (b) and (e) In case of abnormal price increases which come to the notice, the companies are asked to give justification. The required details, if not already available, are called for and the producers are persuaded to bring the price to a reasonable level. Being price decontrolled, no limit on prices increase or MAPE charged has been announced. Monitoring is done on price increase on the basis of available data and internal guidelines to keep prices within reasonable limits.

(c) Companies are required to furnish information in the various forms given in the Fourth Schedule to the DPCO, 1987. Information being voluminous one, the time and labour involed in its collection and compilation will not be commensurate with the result likely to be achieved.

(d) No, Sir.

Prices of essential commodities

384. SHRI R. T. GOPALAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the prices of essential commodities including edible oils, sugar, vegetable, pulses, onion etc. in retail markets as on February 20, 1992;

(b) the measures proposed to counteract inflationary pressure on these commodities; and

(c) the results achieved as a result thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) A Statement showing the retail prices of essential commodities at selected centres as on 20-2-1992 is given in Annexure. *See* Appnedix CLXIII, annexure No. 3)

(b) and (c) The Cabinet Committee on Prices under the Chairmanship of the Union Finance Minister reviews the supply and prices of essentjal commodities at regular intervals and takes appropriate action to correct the imbalances in the demand and supply. Towards this end, palmolein oil has been imported to supplement the overall supply of edible oils in the country. Efforts are also being made to augment

the production of Pulses and oilseeds in the country. Public Distribution System has been revamped and extended to far-flung, remote and hilly areas to help the poorer sections of the society in getting essential items at reasonable prices. For this purpose, 1700 blocks have been selected under the revamped DPS programme. The Government have intensified the action under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 against hoarders, black-marketers and such antisocial elements. During the period 1-1-1992 to 30-3-1992 as many as 17033 raids were made, 521 persons arrested, 955 persons prosecuted, 24 persons convicted and goods worth Rs. 142.81 lakhs has been confiscated. As a result of various measures taken by the Government, there has been a decline in the prices of essential commodities such as Pulses, Potatoes, Onions, Chillies, Tea, Gur, Mustard oil, Groundnut oil and Vanaspati. The price of sugar has also stabilised at most of the centres.

385. [*Transferred to the 8th May*, 1992]

Drive against hoarders

386. SHRI RAM NARESH YADAV:
DR. RATNAKAR PANDEY:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Delhi Administration has taken any steps recently to check godowns to check hoarding of rice/wheat;

(b) if so, the details thereof including the number of traders arrested by the team;

(c) whether the steps to unearth hidden stocks is continuing till date; and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Since January, 1992, Food, Supplies and Consumer Affairs Department of Delhi Administration checked the business premises of 24 rice and wheat traders. FIRs were lodged against eight traders; four persons were arrested. Irregularities committed include non-maintenance of correct accounts of sales/ purchases and or holding stocks in excess of those prescribed during raids and checkings.

(c) and (d) The checking of licences issued under various Control orders issued by the Food Supplies and Consumers affairs Department of Delhi Administration is an ongoing process. Raids/surprise checkings are conducted by the Department from time to time. A control Room is functioning for receiving complaints from the public. An anti-hoarding cell is also attached to the Department for gathering information and rendering assistance during raids and checkings.

High prices of foodgrains in the open Market

387. SHRI RAM NARESH YADAV: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the prices of foodgrains are abnormally high in the major wheat and rice producing States;

(b) if so, whether there is any proposal to introduce State trading in foodgrains eliminating the middlemen; and

(c) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) The prices of foodgrains are generally at reasonable levels as will be evident from the retail prices of foodgrains particularly, Rice, Wheat, Gram and Arhar as on 26-2-1992, 25-3-1992, 8-4-1992 and 22-4-1992 at different Centres given in the attached statement. (*See* below)

(b) and (c) No, Sir.